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The New Christianity

A Quarterly Journal
for its promotion and interpretation

The Scope and Vehicle of the Process of Revelation
Howard D. Spoerl

Aspects of Present Work on the Doctrine of Revelation
Nels F. S Ferré

Revelation and the Prophets
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Post-War Rehabilitation Abroad
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Verse, Book Reviews

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In This Issue

The Scope and Vehicle of the Process of Revelation by Howard Davis Spoerl considers the meaning of revelation from the point of view of a psychologist. Dr. Spoerl is Professor of Psychology at the American International College, Springfield, Mass., and a frequent contributor to New-Church periodicals.

Nels F. S. Ferre is Abbot Professor of Christian Theology in the Andover Newton Theological School. In *Aspects of Present Work on the Doctrine of Revelation* he summarizes the fresh and important work which is being done on this vital topic. Professor Ferré is the author of a number of books, including *Swedish Contributions to Modern Theology, The Christian Faith, The Christian Fellowship,* and *Return to Christianity.*

Carolyn Blackmer, author of *Mothersong,* finds scope for her interest in human problems as minister's wife, mother of four children, and teacher.

The origins, early history and significance of prophecy are discussed in *Revelation and the Prophets* by Richard H. Tafel. Mr. Tafel, the Pastor of the Church of the New Jerusalem in Philadelphia, has a special interest in Old Testament studies.

Betsy Schellenberg is the Field Secretary of the American New-Church League. *Post-War Rehabilitation Abroad* represents her conviction that this type of work offers a stirring challenge to young people.

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The Scope and Vehicle of the Process of Revelation

Howard Davis Spoerl

MAN'S quest for the true and regenerative way of life is beset with contradictions. On the one hand it is admitted that regeneration signifies a gradual and unfolding process, while on the other there is a persistent tendency to seek some quasi-magical formula that might short-circuit this gradual process and terminate the quest once and for all by a single application. Since it is clear that no man is able to devise a formula that would succeed or that his fellows would accept, many who think such a formula is contained in sacred writings have tried to produce it authoritatively by giving it the sanction of "revelation." Disregarding for a moment the basic contradiction of seeking to temporalize the eternal, let us view some of the characteristics of this traditional conception of revelation, considering especially the sort of assumption on which its logic rests.

The traditional conception assumes that truth which is emitted from a Divine source in unmodified form is necessarily more valid for human needs and Divine purposes than is experience which emphasizes neither the emission nor the purity of origin. Because this assumption is made, advocates of the traditional conception of revelation insist that a given sacred writing, for instance, is a kind of self-contained, unearthly message, serviceable as the "magical formula" mentioned above. Although they cannot *demonstrate* this by any evidence other than internal evidence or by reasoning that is not circular, they bitterly resist counter-demonstrations that the sacred writings in question have the characteristics of human documents and reflect the historical cultures in which they were produced. Demonstrations of this character are often considered fatal to the concept of revelation. The view is that Scripture cannot be God's work if it is also man's. Yet in the light of the findings of archeology, history, philology, anthropology, and Biblical criticism, it is becomingly increasingly clear that the narrow, traditional conception of revelation

is not the only possible one. The admission of a non-supernatural factor as the vehicle of revelation broadens its scope and presents it not as an arbitrary once-delivered dictum, but as a continual and eternal *process* comprising in addition to the source of the dictum the cooperative and progressive comprehensions of all who receive it.

The vehicle of revelation, in so far as we possess demonstrable although incomplete knowledge of it, is human personality. Granted that revelation denotes the process of communicating an intelligible formulation from some source to the consciousness of man, a receptive and transmissive factor belonging to man's nature is *necessarily and invariably* involved in completing this process. A mystic or prophet makes statements; their formulation and expression through his "mind" and "body" are a function of his nervous system, his total life experience, his use of language, his sensitivity, *etc.* Whoever responds in any way to his statements likewise exercises his own version of this psychophysiological equipment. A medium produces automatic writing or symbolic actions; again there is the intervention of such equipment. Joseph Smith digs up engraved gold plates containing writing, or convinces himself and others that he has done so; the element of personality is again a feature of the transaction. Unless one contends that the prophet's speech muscles, the medium's hand muscles, and Joseph Smith's visual-motor system are being operated directly, arbitrarily, and supernaturally by something other than the neural mechanisms which normally function in expression, some property of human nature must be admitted as an essential contributing factor. As far as we know, the enraptured scribe employs his own handwriting or some minor variation of it; the person speaking from trance uses his own or some varied form of his own voice. To this extent he must be functioning as more than a mere orifice for the transmission of communication. To this extent at least personality is involved in the process.

In the case of documents ascribed to revelation, far more than the personal handwriting of the scribes who indited the original (and supposedly extinct) manuscripts, was evidently contributed from and through their personalities. By reconstructing the setting in which such manuscripts were produced, Biblical

scholars have shown the participation of cultural, historical, and oftentimes partisan influences and interests. Progress has been made in identifying those portions of Scriptural writing which were successively added to the original manuscripts. If a "primordial core" of revelation is postulated for the documents, it becomes impossible to separate it exactly from the remainder of their content, and even such a "primordial core" must be regarded as a filtrate of the extra-human formulation, outwardly presented through the screen of the writers' personalities. The pure formulation in itself eludes positive identification. The advocate of the "primordial core" or "pure formulation" then has a choice of reverting to the "passive automaton" or "arbitrary dictatorship" theory of revelation, or of adopting a "plenary inspiration" theory that admits participation of the writer's personality but asserts it to be insulated from the context of normal human activity. Both positions are equally indefensible by logic that is devoid of circular reasoning. In consequence, some have embraced the view which denies the extra-human source altogether, asserting that revelation *originates* in and is exhausted by the human author and the proximate or remote human influences upon him. This view has been adopted by some exponents of Biblical scholarship, causing their researches to be viewed with suspicion or to be rejected in many quarters.

Personalty the Cornerstone

There is another way of viewing the whole matter, which avoids the logical dilemma and at the same time permits the substantiation of a conception of Divine revelation. Its cornerstone is that element which is a stumbling-block for other theories—the personality factor. The nature of the *total* personality factor may be illustrated by reviewing in bare outline the reception and development of revealed communication.

A person known as Jesus of Nazareth, for instance, lives in the world, making pronouncements and performing acts that attract notice. Years after his biological death and in circumstances that seemingly preclude any very credible eye-witness recording, several documents appear which purport to present his life and mission in the world. These documents are copied over and over again, the originals being lost, and are eventually stabilized in

accepted versions in various languages. Meanwhile a movement having a special interest in their preservation and propagation has come into being. It is established, without adequate extant written records of its own, before the documents are produced or at least before they become stabilized. After the passage of more time the special movement, having become a considerable force in civilization, is likewise stabilized in a few definite organized forms, and proceeds to sort out the several documents in existence. Four of the biographies are chosen, along with other manuscripts, and thereafter these hold the official status of revealed communications, while other similar biographies are rejected from consideration. As the centuries unfold, the selection is revised by various branches of the original movement. This is an objective, external, minimal, and depersonalized account of the total process which culminated in the formation of the canons of Christian Scripture.

At what point in this sequence is the process of revelation effected? Is it during the stage of a possible oral tradition about Jesus of Nazareth, or on the production of the first Gospel manuscript, at some point in the sequence of translation, copying, and revision, in the period of the church's acknowledged need for written material, or in the selection of the canon? Does not raising the question in this way answer it? the answer being: *there is no one point that can be assigned as determinative for revelation.* All points in the historical sequence are equally essential. This is shown by considering what did *not* happen in the sequence. At about the period of Jesus' life on earth there were others, Apollonius of Tyana for example, who sought recognition or were recognized among their followers as occupying a special position, whether as that of divinity incarnate, that of Messiah, that of extraordinary teacher or miracle worker. Writings from or concerning such personages have been preserved, but they did not become the central figures of extant religions. In this period, as in all periods, numerous cults and would-be religions existed; they are now buried among the records of a dead antiquity. Moreover, within the Christian tradition only certain manuscripts and certain translations of manuscripts came to be accepted as authentic examples of revelation and sources of doctrine. Finally, the formation of the Roman Catholic canon in the fourth century

and the subsequent formations of non-Catholic canons, depended on particular acts of choice influenced in other ways than by the content of the documents ultimately selected. Revelation, then, if it was anywhere, was involved at every point in the entire development. It proceeded at least as much by way of human personality, individually and collectively, as it did through any particular content of any document.

The total process of revelation does not turn on some single and exclusive point of contact that is "miraculous" in the traditional sense of the word. If "miraculous" scribeship is claimed for an allegedly single author of, for instance, the Gospel of Mark, then "miraculous" perception of this gospel's values, "miraculous" recognition of religious need of cultivating them, and "miraculous" selectivity and choosing, should also be claimed at the other points in the sequence. It becomes clear that nothing is gained but confusion in using this or any similar adjective. A chief difficulty with the old supernaturalistic conception of revelation thus lies in its *narrowness* rather than in its pretentiousness. Also, most of those who would reject the traditional conception have attacked it on the least effectual grounds. We are now beginning to see that revelation is an unfolding and expanding process, functioning throughout time and requiring the participation of all contributing elements.

There is nothing remarkable nor anything prejudicial to religion, about evidence showing the successive contributions from "earthly" sources to the phraseology, expositions, emphases, and selection of Scriptural documents. There is ample scope for a view of revelation that holds the entire historical sequence to be an unique unfolding, from human and extra-human sides alike, of converging factors in its production. Revelation so conceived never stands or falls according to the authenticity ascribed to any particular Scriptural passage that scholarship may question. Divine efforts to enlighten and regenerate the world depend for their accomplishment upon the world's capacity and willingness to be enlightened and regenerated. He who hath not eyes—the kind of vision needed for his instruction—cannot see, and no amount of authoritarian urging that he accept on faith without being in charity, can possibly change this essential state of affairs. In the realm of human uses, the significant question is not that

of how a revelation was instituted, but rather that of *how we may perfect it by completing its reception.*

Revelation's Wider Context

Analyses of books of the Bible, made solely in terms of their internal evidence and content, are misleading, unprofitable, and in a real sense of the word, *deadly*. Nevertheless most theories of revelation have persistently followed this kind of analytical method. If revelation is to be sought here, it should be sought equally in other places in order to obtain a complete picture. These "other places" include the spiritual readiness of readers, of followers, of disputants as to meaning, in the successive periods of the era. They include the sociology and psychology of humanity and of portions of humanity, working out its course of regeneration or degeneration as the case may be. In this context, it is a matter of mere curiosity rather than of vital importance, whether one or many authors produced a gospel account, whether oral tradition or "inspired" writing governed the production, whether events in the narrative are accounts of "objective" events that took place in the outside world. The development of religion, as the quest on the part of mankind for insight to be had from acceptable rather than unacceptable sources, is the surest indication of the Lord's presence, not simply through some few esoteric utterances, but in *every* phase and feature of the total development. Nothing *less* than *all this* is entitled to be set up as "a revelation." The Lord is revealed by the eyes that see and comprehend what they read as much as by the writing that is being read.

In the face of this thesis one might raise these questions: But did Jesus of Nazareth really exist? Did he raise a man named Lazarus from the dead? Did he preach a sermon on the Mount to an assembled group of followers? Was he crucified by the Romans and did his body depart from its tomb? There seems to be no way of answering such questions positively in the sense of historical objectivity. But in a deeper spiritual sense, exactly how much do the *literal* answers *matter*? This we know: That progressively as the Christian religion developed, men were moved to represent Jesus as the figure appearing in the Gospels, and that such representation gave them access to a more intimate

and a more adequate grasp of life and destiny. Different ages have prized different emphases, and have held up varying facets of the total insight as being especially satisfying to them. One other thing is clear: As an outstanding theologian once put it, "it takes a Jesus to forge a Jesus." Christ in a book is one more bookish content; Christ in the *heart* that is open to the book, to men, to God, is saving power.

If a religion is valid in accordance with the truth of the statements, allusions, and records in terms of which it is formulated; if, in short, it represents God's plan for man's regeneration, then we cannot well pick some items as truths and reject others because they do or do not conform to a particular logic of credibility. Nor on the other hand can we enslave ourselves to a superstitious literalism that worships one closely defined "revelation." What is needed in order to escape this dilemma is a dynamic conception of truth, which is sufficiently inclusive in scope to unify the insights we are able to attain. This unification of insights *is* revelation, on the formulative side, and the life of man in society makes him sensitive to its reception. As Emanuel Swedenborg pointed out:

> Many things (in the Word) are appearances of truth, and not naked truths; and many things are written in adaptation to the capacity of the natural, yes, of the sensual man; and yet, so that the simple may understand them simply, the intelligent intelligently, and the wise wisely. Now because the Word is such, the appearance of truths, which are truths with their clothing, may be taken for naked truths; and when these are confirmed they become falsities. But this is done by those who believe themselves to be wise above others, when yet they are not wise; for to be wise *is to see whether a thing is true before it is confirmed;* but not to confirm whatever one pleases. (*Doctrine of Sacred Scripture,* No. 91. Italics inserted.)

They are wise who live responsively to the total course and domain of revelation, and thereby help to perfect it.

Aspects of Present Work on the Doctrine of Revelation

Nels F. S. Ferre

THE writer's predecessor in teaching theology had no special place for revelation. The present course gives more time to this than to any other topic. This situation is typical. A critical age has forced upon us the twin problems of authority and motivation. These, in turn, have pushed us into a theocentric approach in which the question of revelation becomes critical.

In this article we shall merely indicate certain aspects of modern inquiry in the field. The selection of authors and works must be stringent. The principle of selection will be the centrality of the works in this specific field and their importance. The first consideration will exclude writers of first importance in the field of the philosophy of religion like Baillie, Bowman, etc. Works in foreign languages will also be omitted except one in German which is too important to leave out and one in Swedish which offers a significant, original approach.

Naturally, many topics will also have to be left out: mysticism, divination, prophetism, inspiration, ecstacy, and all the problems of the psychology of religion. Modern interest lies mostly elsewhere.

Present Works

In our short bibliography it may be useful to give a few general works and indicate their nature. For scholarship, interest, and readability no recent work in its field equals E. F. Scott's *The New Testament Idea of Revelation.* The history of the doctrine will be adequately indicated by two works, both small, but rich and clear: Gilson's *Reason and Revelation in the Middle Ages* treats with particular clarity and power the background and meaning of the Augustinian-Anselmian position that faith must precede reason and the Thomistic, that faith is the extension of reason. Lilley's *Religion and Revelation* treats with exceptional pertinence the doctrine of revelation in the writings of the

Reformation. Scott, Gilson, and Lilley thus together cover the three classical periods in the history of our doctrine.

For the modern periods we suggest four general works. Baillie and Martin have edited *Revelation,* a volume specially prepared for the Edinburgh Conference, and containing the varied approaches of leading ecumenical theologians. The contributions by Aulén, Barth, Bulgakov, and, from the American point of view, Horton, are notable. A well written summary of modern trends is Dickie's *Revelation and Response.* The first volume of the Madras series, *The Authority of the Faith,* handles from a comprehensive point of view by many authors the relation of the Christian revelation to non-Christian faiths. Outstanding chapters are contributed by Kraemer, Chao, and Hogg. Hammar has a relevant work on American theology, *Christian Realism in Contemporary American Theology.*

From the liberal tradition we select six. Three of the older volumes are still standbys. They are Illingworth's *Reason and Revelation,* Bavink's *The Philosophy of Revelation,* and Söderblom's *The Nature of Revelation.* The first is strong in the line of reason and general experience; the second, on the score of science; the third, in the field of personal prophetism and the original in history. Three recent books show the vigor and adaptability of liberalism: Bevan's *Symbolism and Belief,* Temple's *Nature, Man, and God,* and Robinson's *Redemption and Revelation.* The first is notable for its wrestle with the deeper significance of terms; the second contains a profound section on special and general revelation; the third is strongest in its treatment of history.

The existential school (to be described later) is today's most vital trend. We may call Kierkegaard, a Danish thinker of about one hundred years ago, its founder. Since the translation of his works is just now reaching its climax with us, his books must be on our list. Brunner calls him the greatest of modern minds and there is no denying his basic challenge of most modern presuppositions. Before reading *Concluding Unscientific Postscript* one ought to read two of his other works: *Philosophical Fragments* and *Either/Or.* Modern exponents of the existential school fairly abound. Barth the prophet (1921-1927) can best be seen in the second edition of his *Epistle to the Romans;* Barth the pro-

fessor (1927-) in the *Doctrine of the Word of God.* Barth has stirred up both more opposition and more admiration than any other living theologian. Buber's *I and Thou* is an existential masterpiece by a Jewish mystic. A vigorous treatment of revelation as the fourth dimension is found in Heim's *God Transcendent.* The most balanced, comprehensive, and satisfying of all works in this school is Brunner's new *Offenbarung und Vernunft.* An expert is now translating it. The writer classifies this as Brunner's greatest. In this country Richard Niebuhr has written what Tillich, the master of the existential approach, terms the greatest American book on the subject, *The Meaning of Revelation.*

The best work representing the non-literalist American conservative position is Edwin Lewis' *The Philosophy of the Christian Revelation.*

Sweden is at present experiencing a theological renaissance and has produced a goodly number of works on revelation. The most significant, however, is Nygren's *Dogmatikens vetenskapliga grundläggning.* Here he completes his transcendental method in which religious experience is shown to be a categorical necessity presupposed by all experience and by every other kind of validity, with a "motif" method according to which the content of revelation is inaccessible to the theoretical reason while open to faith-judgments. No short statement can do justice to the ingenuity and vigor of this view in its wholeness. The interested reader, however, can get some idea of it by reading the writer's *Swedish Contributions to Modern Theology,* chapters 1-3.

The Neo-Eastern Orthodox is represented by two particularly strong scholars. Berdyaev's best book on this subject is *Spirit and Reality,* where the ontological approach is exchanged for the pneumatological (that is, all existence or "objectification" is held to be derivative and dependent on the spiritual realm). Bulgakov's *The Wisdom of God* is strong in its stress on the continuities of revelation, the sophiological character of God's self-disclosure, and in its suggestive discussion of the meaning of the image of God for revelation.

The Neo-Thomists are best portrayed by Maritain's *Degrees of Knowledge* where science and analogy are excellently discussed, and Przywara's *Polarity,* where a wide construction of *analogia*

entis is offered in rebuttal to Barth's dialectical theology. Suggestive on the subject are also Gilson's *The Unity of Philosophical Experience* and *The Philosophy of Saint Bonaventure.*

Although this list is severely sheared, it can serve as an introduction for all those who are interested in the subject and yet are uncertain where to begin in the study of it.

Present Problems: Revelation and History

For our discussion of present problems we select four main topics: the relation of revelation to history, to reason, to continuity, and to finality.

There is today increasing stress on the idea that revelation is historical in the sense that it is primarily not an idea but an event. Events, moreover, consist of personal relations. Systems of thought are peripheral. At the center of the circle is God who confronts man as a "Thou" in Christ. Not nouns or adjectives but verbs are held to be central. Christ came, became flesh, healed, died, rose. Things, ideas, systems, laws always tend to come between man and God. With the Greeks it was logical laws; with the Hebrews, moral laws; with us, natural laws. But historical revelation is direct through a concrete historical event, a living Son of God.

This stress on history also involves the meaning of time. The whole Christ and the whole Bible must be met in the *now,* accepted *now,* served *now* by man as a whole or there is no revelation. Objective conditions in the past do not constitute revelation; only the possibilities for it. Nor can revelation be understood except by actors in history. No speculation can grasp it; no "balcony view" disclose it. The wasness of the was has no power or reality in the present as the locus of the real. Only the isness of the was, operative on historical deciders in present history has the reality and truth of revelation.

This stress sometimes takes a plural form according to which there is no revelation except through a historic fellowship. The fellowship is itself the revelation and all ideas, systems, or dogmas are merely relative by-products. All rational "fetters" of the past are resolutely rejected as having no binding power in the present.

To others no revelation is adequate unless it be channeled through dependable historic continuities. Special revelation is

ever beyond all general revelation and if this special revelation cannot be defined, at least confined within any system of thought, only a living continuity like the church can constitute adequate means of continuity. There is accordingly a growing consciousness of the relation of the church to revelation.

There is also great stress on historical relativism. All time and thinking is relative. Time is in man as well as man in time. All histories are in relative time. We may not therefore talk of a universal or superior revelation. We must rather recognize that we stand within a distinct historic continuity that forms a kind of *a priori,* or presupposition, for our whole thinking and acting. If we are convinced of our faith we ought indeed to view universal history from our own perspective but we have no right and no capacity to argue about what we see since we see it only from our limited perspective. Inner history and outer history must not be confused. We may be no more than humble confessors of our faith. Revelation is "for us" and can be understood by us vitally only from within our own historic continuity and perspective.

In another way history has direct bearing on revelation. It opens avenues of verification. If good and evil were always in constant proportion to one another, there would be no objective way of showing that God is good and may yet be victorious over evil. History tells us, however, that there was a time when there was no life on earth, no consciousness, no logical inference, no morality, and no *agape*-love as shown in Jesus. If there is to be an adequate account of these novel emergences genetically, we know that there must be a superhistorical realm. There was a time that they were not in history. Now they are. And a stream rises no higher than its source. Else the whole principle of sufficient explanation is exploded and we are left with sheer arbitrariness. We have the miracle of the new, and that without a Creator! Into history have come these significant emergences with ideals not only rationally realizable but also possessing some degree of actualization. This line of thought is full of promise and will doubtless be further developed.

Revelation and Reason

The relation between revelation and reason, our second topic,

is complicated by modern investigations into the nature of the passional reason. The theoretical reason is held by certain modern thinkers to deal competently only with formal and factual relations. All value judgments, norms or statements concerning the ultimate are assigned to the sphere of the passional reason. And this is servant of desire. Revelation is thus reduced to wishful thinking, compensation, regression, sublimation, or what not. Our fears produce illusions which serve as refuge from the hard realities of life. Modern theology is divided as to its use of this critical or skeptical philosophy. Many theologians work hard to substantiate the competence of general reason and the reliability of our interpretation of experience as a whole. Others rejoice to have reason rejected as a judge of ultimate truth. For they hold anyway that revelation is a faith-judgment beyond rational criticism, an existential event inaccessible to systematic review. They disregard the entire scientific approach, and the philosophic in great measure, of objectivity as the surest road to knowledge. That is rather one way to religious impotency and falsehood. Truth is rather subjectivity. It is the confrontation of personal spirit with Personal Spirit. A God of love cannot be known in cold abstract terms or caught in logical nets. He can only be known from moment to moment through personal surrender and commitment. This struggle between objectivists and subjectivists is likely to become intensified in the near future. Others like the writer will take a third approach, believing that the crucial problem lies in the relation *between* the theoretical and the existential perspectives and that both have certain kinds of relevance and significance for the problems of revelation.

The problems of perspective are also receiving increased recognition. Many of the dialectical thinkers will pursue further the road of paradox which they have started. They hold that the nature of religion is alogical, not subject to usual rational inference and tests, and can therefore be grasped best in terms of myth, story, or symbol. Even many who believe in the capacity of reason to sift, check, and challenge the content of revelation hold that symbol is the profoundest medium of knowledge. There is thus also bound to be extensive investigation into the field of symbolic realism. But whatever happens in the areas of paradox and symbol, the question of ultimate perspective is bound to become

acute. Does the natural or substantive, the moral, the juridical, or the personal perspective, for instance, provide the fullest understanding of our relation to God?

Continuity and Discontinuity

A third problem concerns revelation in its relation to continuity, discontinuity, or some form of synthesis of the two. This is, of course, an age-long problem. Tertullian, Luther, Pascal, Kierkegaard, and many others have taken the point of view that revelation is discontinuous, not only with regard to reason proper, but with respect also to man's general nature, morality, and culture. Justin Martyr, Aquinas, and the whole liberal tradition have stressed continuity, a concept prominent both in philosophy, as developed, for instance, by Leibniz, and in modern science. Augustine, Anselm, and their followers have stressed synthesis of the two concepts. Their particular synthesis was that we believe in order to know, faith being itself a medium of knowledge. Since World War I the shift has been increasingly and rapidly toward the first point of view; discontinuity may be stressed more vitally today than in any period of Christian history.

The whole neo-orthodox movement with its immense energy is shouting from the housetops that those are blind who cannot see that man is naturally evil through and through. Barth maintains that man is totally depraved. No one has ever stressed both so radically and strongly that the whole image of God in man was totally destroyed by the Fall. All lines from man to God are broken; only the line from God to man can give light and salvation; and this line is unique and single—in the Incarnation once and for always of God in Jesus Christ. If Barth represents the Neo-Calvinist point of view, the most prominent Neo-Lutheran, Nygren, also maintains that all of man's natural drives are *eros,* a self-seeking desire which colors and distorts even his highest ideals and loves. Only God's love as revealed in Christ, the divine *agape,* can give revelation and salvation. Even erstwhile American liberals are now convinced that natural man can constitute no cosmic index.

Between man's morality and God's revelation there is also an unbridgeable chasm. Baillie held in *The Interpretation of Religion* that morality was a *prius* of all religious knowledge. This

has been a general approach since Kant's stress on religion as springing from the needs of the practical reason. Today, however, all man's actions and ideals are viewed by large sections of theologians as belonging to an organic whole, to a basic pattern, which is demonic or distorted by evil to the point that they reveal idols rather than the true God. Similarly all non-Christian religions, not to mention cultures, are to be viewed as wholes which, though they contain truths, become woefully misleading unless they are judged in the light of God's full revelation in Jesus Christ.

Even though discontinuity now holds the initiative, the other two lines have able champions, and the full battle has not yet been joined.

There are, for instance, several able attempts at modern synthesis. Richard Niebuhr holds that revelation is neither the development nor the destruction of natural religion but the total revolution of the religious life where the truth in the old is preserved in a new and cleansed combination. The Swedish theologians hold that the form of revelation is accessible to reason (continuity) but the content can be grasped by faith alone (discontinuity). Tillich and Brunner debate whether the form and content inevitably affect one another. Other solutions seek continuity not from below but from above, or not antecedent to the coming of the revelation but consequent to its appearance. Some, like the writer, are pressing the dynamic relation between existential and theoretical thinking.

Finality

The last topic we can only mention. What will be done with the problem of finality? Is revelation now complete, except for our understanding of it, or do we yet wait for new light? Is revelation true for our history, our cosmos, but incomplete as far as eternity is concerned? This is heresy surely, and yet many, many minds are wrestling right now with the relation between cosmological and metaphysical universals. Have we been Ptolemaic or geocentric in theology? Must we go on to true theocentricity?

Part of this problem may originate from our having made *nous,* reason, central even in Christian theology. What if we should

take *agape,* the basic motif of Christianity, and rework the whole Christian history and system of theology? Can Christian thinkers work out a doctrine of revelation, in terms of both modes and content, where the entire *nous* approach is radically broken through and as far as possible abandoned?

The last question of our last topic concerns the extent of the absolute revelation. An extreme transcendence holds that God revealed himself in Jesus only, and that even there this revelation is beyond rational definition or systematic interpretation. Jesus is even held to be at the edge of history and only tangent to it. Under the influence of Aristotle, and Greek presuppositions generally, whatever partakes of historic change or dwells among the imperfections of society is also itself imperfect. As far as the Incarnation itself is concerned, this is now a little more readily accepted by the extremest within history. Imagine "Christian" theologians denying the *historic* nature of the *Incarnation!*

This denial, however, has beside the philosophic root of transcendence also an ethical root. If life can be lived within the relativities of society and yet remain essentially above these; if the spirit is not necessarily contaminated by influences from without; if guilt is personal rather than social, the social being derivative and consequential but not primary, then social relativism is broken through and the ethics of Jesus become relevant even in definite areas of non-conformity. This idea certain modern theologians abhor. "Be ye perfect even as your Father" becomes a straight command, however far short of it we may fall, and not merely an occasion to reveal our natural sinful pride.

The Holy Spirit can also be in history, in this case; while if all in history, merely by being in history, becomes evil, we can obviously have no doctrine of the Holy Spirit, God in us, *in history.* Right now this question of whether the absolute is accessible in history for the adequate guidance of the church is under hot debate by the Theological Commission appointed by the Federal Council to study the relation of the church to the war. The social relativists naturally deny that the Church can be a redemptive dimension in history, a dimension discontinuous from the general standards and organic whole approach of the world. The opposite side claims the true church is the continuity of the Incarnation through the Holy Spirit witnessing in word and deed to a new order in the world.

These questions of revelation are radically relevant and important. Our search for motivation and authority is for revelation: the answer we receive through our reaction to that Ultimate which no one can evade. Days like these suggest that much work will have to be done on the question of revelation; and that shortly.

MOTHERSONG

Could I have held you cradled thus,
dear one, and not know
the longing men must ever feel
beneath their careful show
of courage, for the caress and safety
of encircling arms,
and warm protection of return
to all sweet mothering balm:
to tender hollows of green hills;
home's welcoming embrace;
familiar nurturing of native
tongue and land; soft grace
of brooding curve and lulling sound;
death's womb; and, when wars cease,
Jerusalem, encompassing
her own with walls of peace?
O, Everlasting Arms, Thy love
with gentle strength enfolds
all mother-yearning ones within
this war-sick, aching world.

Carolyn A. Blackmer

Revelation and the Prophets

Richard H. Tafel

IT was axiomatic in all ancient religions that the gods could—and did—communicate intelligibly with human beings, either spontaneously or in answer to questions. This fact is of fundamental importance to any church claiming to possess a special revelation. The phenomenon itself, as well as the resultant revelation, cannot be understood or appreciated without reference to the existence of revelation elsewhere in the world. Its validity, for the Christian, can only be substantiated when it is seen in relation to the revealing of the mind of God as exhibited in the Bible, which itself rests ultimately on the experiences of the great prophets of Israel. This is tantamount to saying that the phenomenon of revelation rests on the validity of the psychological or religious experiences of those prophets.

We heirs of the religion of the ages have a poor estimate of prophecy. Our understanding and appreciation of the prophets of Israel has been small, out of all proportion to the facts. We chop up the great prophets into "Major and Minor." We call the Former Prophets "Historical Books," thereby revealing our lack of understanding. But we have done something more fatal than this. We have blinded our eyes to the development, the refining, and the elevating of the office of the prophet, and the progressive insight into truth which is revelation. And where we have seen the progressive element of revelation, it is without a parallel development or evolution of the prophetic function. We must therefore retrace our steps, and pick up the threads that we have dropped.

Revelation does not exist in a vacuum, nor does it strike the world with the suddenness of lightning. It has a long history, a period of preparation. It is indeed fortunate that the Bible, which gives us the greatest revelation of the mind of God, also preserves for us the very steps by which that revelation came. Prophecy—that mysterious bridging of the gulf between the seen and the unseen—arose in Israel out of crude beginnings in an environment saturated with superstitions. Divination, soothsaying, enchant-

ments, charms (by magic knots, spells, incantations), ghosts, mediums, and necromancy were prominent characteristics of the people among whom the Hebrews came. Inevitably the Israelites adopted much of this background, for it was not only a part of the thought-life of the times, but even more fundamentally was necessary for the daily life of the individual. That this did not become the natural expression of the religion of Israel was due to the development of prophecy.

We usually think of prophecy as synonymous with Israel. After a certain point in its development, this is true. But prophecy, as we first meet it there, is a part of a wider movement that is not even Semitic in origin. It seems to have had its home in Thrace or Asia Minor, and to have been Aryan in origin. It passed into Greece, and thence into India where the ecstasy took the form of the absorption in contemplation, passive and ascetic. It was possibly connected with the Aryan intoxicating sacred drink (Meth, Soma, Haoma), and associated with the moon cult. It passed into Greece in the worship of Dionysius (Bacchus) and thus became the mother of Greek tragedy. (The word "tragedy" is from the Greek *tragos* "a goat." The goat-skins of the original dancing chorus from which the drama arose may be compared with the Hebrew prophets' "hairy mantle.")

Antecedents of Prophecy

Thus Hebrew prophecy, as we come to know it in Amos or Isaiah, has already had a long history. It rests on primitive prophecy which sprang from the Canaanite religion. We first catch a glimpse of such prophecy, in the sense of ecstatic and dervish-like products of abnormal psychology, in the story of Wenamon, from an Egyptian document of 1100 B.C. This tells us of the frenzy that came upon a Canaanite youth during a sacrifice, in which he uttered a prophetic message. This incident connects with the frenzy of the prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel. In the story of Saul, we are first introduced to the "sons of the prophets" and the prophetic movement in Israel. These prophets, or "dervishes," were bands of enthusiastic devotees marked off from other men by their hairy mantle, their tattoo-marks or tonsure, who worked up the ecstatic frenzy by dancing, music, and other means. As organized bands, we read of them now in

connection with the Philistine peril and later in the times of the Syrian wars. They seem to have been the inspiration and the backbone of the national resistance to the oppressors, carrying, as it were, "the fiery cross" from one end of the land to the other. These prophets of Jehovah were perhaps less violent, but none the less abnormal in their behavior. Saul, meeting them, was drawn to share it by psychical sympathy. He "fell into the prophetic frenzy," and on another occasion Saul stripped off his clothes and prophesied before Samuel and lay down naked all that day and all that night. We can see how little of religious worth there was in this experience by itself, but all later mysticism in all religions that lead to the ecstatic trance, without issuing in any deeper understanding or ethical insight, is of the same sort. These ecstatic feeling-states are often surrounded by a halo of seeming spiritual exaltation, but in reality they belong to the most primitive stages of religion, if to religion at all.

There is always a tendency to see divine inspiration in states of high emotional tension. The prophets believed that in the ecstatic trance the deity, or his spirit, entered physically into them. They were at first mere religious enthusiasts given to emotional paroxysms. Convinced that they were physically inspired, the prophets uttered the words of God, saying "Thus saith the Lord!" What was this ecstatic element in primitive prophecy? As we see it in the early stories, we may describe it as a fit or attack that affected the whole body. The limbs were sometimes stimulated to violent action, wild leaping and contortions that were more or less rhythmical, often finding expression in wild, frantic dancing. The vocal organs were sometimes involved, noises and sounds unrecognizable as human speech, and unintelligible. The face and aspect changed, and the man literally became another person. There was insensibility to pain, even when the limbs were cut and slashed. This prophetic ecstasy was in some cases clearly spontaneous. There were also means used to induce it, such as music, wine, and fixing the eyes on a particular object. It is not strange that ecstasy was often confused with wilder forms of insanity. The East has always held madness to be a divine visitation; the madman is one who is especially possessed by God. The word "prophet" is even used in the sense of "insane," "crazy," "lunatic." David, fearing King Achish of Gath, feigned insanity

by successfully imitating the wild transports of the prophets of Ramah! In such states of ecstasy, in the active and passive trance, the person experienced hallucinations of sight, hearing, taste, touch, sense illusions, and sometimes even hypnosis and auto-suggestion. What the ecstatic sees and hears in trance is perhaps the expression of his personality. It is the fruit, perhaps ripened in unconsciousness, of his reflections, of his previous religious experiences, of the deep tendencies of his whole being, rising to the threshold of consciousness like something which appears to him to come from outside himself.

The Higher Prophecy

This was the essential type of person the prophet was, or at least this was his ancestor. Literature reveals a succession of prophets, prior to the eighth century, who stand head and shoulders above these ecstatic bands—Gad, Nathan, Ahijah, Micaiah, besides Elijah and Elisha. Thus we must not think of eighth century prophecy in either its lower and psychical or its higher and moral aspects, as something wholly without precedent. The line of prophets, and the corresponding conceptions of prophecy, ran through many grades from the earlier ecstatic type to the deeply spiritual type represented in Isaiah and Jeremiah. The primitive, ecstatic, mechanical conception of prophecy, however, is no farther removed from the later, spiritual view than is the conception of deity. The conceptions both of deity and of prophecy moved gradually from the mechanical and local toward the spiritual and universal. Primitive prophecy was gradually refined, controlled to an extent, and given a new content. Those who accepted payment for prophesying were condemned. Dreams were now largely discredited. Inspiration was no longer provoked by physical means, such as collective excitement, music, dances, drinks, or a night spent in the temple. The prophet now had to wait for divine counsel. The prophets now thought they heard within themselves the "Word of Jehovah," not only when they were really in ecstatic trance, but also when they were in a state of excitement analogous to what we call poetic or artistic inspiration, when words and images seem to crowd of their own accord into the mind and are apparently dictated to it.

Though there was no sharp break between the early and the

great prophets yet the difference is clear and distinct when we compare an Isaiah or a Jeremiah with the rude fellows of Saul's day. The prophets simply grew with the nation, with their religion, and with their God. The transition was a process of normal, natural growth. When the prophets had attained the stature of an Amos, they sought to disassociate themselves from the traditional prophetic movement. They recognized that they were connected with these humble origins, but sensed that they had outgrown, or largely outgrown, the primitive ecstatic elements in it. For them, prophecy was so very different that it must be considered a different phenomenon. I think we feel this as we listen to Amos's ringing cry for social justice and international brotherhood, to the lofty poetic insight of Isaiah, or to the penetrating contemplations of a Jeremiah pounded out on the anvil of tragedy. Here is a matured and finely balanced personality, a trained and prepared mind susceptible to impressions from the world of the unseen, constituting an easy channel of communication between the two worlds. The prophets can only be understood as great religious thinkers and leaders, as outstanding statesmen, and as patriots with a burning social passion.

They were, at the most, mystics rather than ecstatics, closely related to the religious experiences of all subsequent ages. They had a living conviction that the course of history was in the hand of God, who had a purpose and plan for his people, and that this divine plan was from time to time revealed step by step to his prophets. The test of true prophecy is the fulfilment of the prophet's word. Yet it is true that the higher Hebrew prophecy is interpretative, not predictive, has insight rather than foresight of particular events, and is concerned chiefly with morality and religion. The true prophet of Israel was, and always will be everywhere, the interpreter of the contemporaneous mind of God. He is one who has stood in the counsel of God, who has God's passion for righteousness and truth, and the courage to declare to "Jacob (everywhere) his transgression, and to Israel his sin."

As we follow the rise of prophecy in Israel, we leave behind the primeval chaos of ecstacy, trance, and dervish, and emerge into the calm waters where mature personality serenely beholds the elemental purposes of God. With measured majesty they bring

forth the word of truth and inspiration that is necessary to social, national, and world progress, and declare the way of life to individuals and nations. As such they stand close to us in spirit. They are the fellow truth-seekers of Paul on the Damascus Road, of Augustine in the Garden, of Mohammed in the Cave, of Swedenborg in the quiet of his study. They have laid hold of, comprehended, and appreciated something of the Wisdom of God that moves at the heart of the universe, of history, and of life; the Wisdom of God, however apprehended, which has guided and inspired men of all ages, of all lands, of all religions. For this is Revelation.

ON DISAPPOINTMENT

I would like to grow free
In my own quick way—
I have so much I want to do,
So much I want to say.

But my tree is tied to a stake;
It has to grow straighter;
It is pruned back now
That it flower later.

Send down your roots, my soul—
I am no weeper;
Though my branches be cut
I will grow deeper.

M. E. C.

Post-War Rehabilitation Abroad

Betsy Schellenberg

CIVILIAN rehabilitation abroad, that much talked of post-war possibility, offers one of the most challenging opportunities to exemplify the parable of the Good Samaritan that has come the way of mankind in many a day. Possibly the way we understand and treat this vital problem may determine our chance of obtaining a just and durable peace in our time.

It is unfortunate that many misleading interpretations have been planted in the minds of men concerning rehabilitation. A popularly prevalent definition seems to hold that it is a process whereby the victor enters, as a victor, into the scene of destruction. Moved by misguided enthusiasm, he proceeds to force his country's ideas, habits of thought, and ways of action upon a people—in a sense pulling the vanquished to their feet whether they wish it or not. Holders of this interpretation go on to point out that the vanquished may not want outside help; people with other traditions of thought and activity may not welcome having our culture forcibly put upon them. With this few will disagree.

Rehabilitation can spell the greatest hope of mankind if it is wisely used. It is based on a truly Christian principle—that of extending the helping hand to those sorely in need. The danger, of course, arises as to the ways and means of helping. But it is difficult to see how anyone who truly subscribes to the precepts of Christianity can fail to realize that rehabilitation is necessary to preserve the Christian way of life—the very way of life for which we believe the battle is now being fought.

Modern psychology shows that leadership of any sort may be accomplished in two ways; by personality, whether the personality of an individual or a nation, where the ideas and desires of the leader are carried out because he is the leader, and those who follow are given little chance at the molding of their own destinies; and by indirect leadership. The second appears the weaker of the two methods, but though assuredly slower, it has been definitely proved to have results with firmer roots. Indirect

leadership contents itself with guidance, leaving the basic decisions, the choice of projects and their success or failure, in the hands of the people who are being guided. It lends a helping hand where help is desired and keeps out when help is not, though the keeping out may impede immediate progress. People who decide for themselves, who make their own successes or failures, however, are always stronger. This is a much harder type of leadership for the leader, who must keep the role of counselor, guiding but not directing. It is the type of leadership that is being trained by the present program for rehabilitation abroad.

A great deal has been said and written lately concerning the necessity of planning for the period that will follow directly upon the conclusion of the Armistice. In *Harpers Magazine,* October, 1943, Hiram Motherwell writes:

> When Nazi Europe cracks—this year or next—America and Britain will face the responsibilities of military government and civilian rehabilitation wherever Yank or Tommy are in military control—which could include all of west and central Europe and much of the Balkans. And the methods and procedures we adopt will influence the political and economic future of Europe for generations.
>
> But when that time comes shall we find ourselves, in all probability, merely lords over chaos? Throughout much of the territory we occupy all cohesion—political, economic, social—will have been rent asunder. In such a situation we shall have to supply some measure of emergency relief, some sort of improvised government, some preliminary strategy for economic and political reconstruction. . . . Are we ready to meet a situation which may hit us between the eyes overnight?

The government has established extensive training courses for members of the armed forces. More thoroughly than ever before are service men being steeped in the traditions, the history, the skills, the economy, the laws, of areas which will require a military government immediately, and for some time, after the coming of the armistice. But the problem is too vast to be handled by the army and navy alone.

Training Programs

The Pacific School of Religion in its prospectus covering its post-war rehabilitation training program writes as follows:

> With many of the major spiritual blights in areas over which the shadow of war has swept back and forth, the government will be able to concern themselves at most indirectly and incidentally. There will be the problem of the recovery of the capacity and courage to trust people again. There will be the conversion of emotions of revenge into constructive channels of community rebuilding. There will be the revival of the sheer will and grit to live and take up life again. There will be the restoration of family life. There will be the incorporation of uprooted and vagrant individuals into wholesome groups. There will be religious institutions that need strengthening. There will be the establishment of colony schools on the land for orphans and the setting up of work camps for dislocated and unemployed youth.
>
> . . . As occupied and belligerent areas are opened up and order restored, famine and epidemics brought under control, the way will be opened for variously trained and well balanced men and women to carry on this work of personal and community service. Theirs will be, in most cases, an informal ministry, detached from the regular institutions of religion.

The fields of service which will be open will be wide in scope. An over-all background in what is called regional study is the first topic in any rehabilitation program. It is necessary that the student become thoroughly familiar with the history, the physical and human geography, the racial and ethnic groupings, the local institutions and *mores,* the national organizations and institutions, the various religions prevalent in the area, the political and social ideologies of the area and of the Axis, and the problem of political and social reconstruction involved in the re-establishing of international relations. When the student has become familiar with this material, he will be better able to choose his specific field of service.

The types of problems most likely to arise are then given special study. The Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California, devotes a complete section of its course to the study of group enterprises such as neighborhood councils, colony schools, work camps, craft factories and workshops, producers and consumers cooperatives, playgrounds, public health and sanitation, festivals and fairs, housing, camps and homes for migrants and evacuees, and women's organizations. The background of their course is religious, for they feel that the problem of rehabilitation, by its very nature, is one that is bound up in Christianity. They do not

wish, however, to turn the program into a training course for missionaries. The work calls for the promotion of no one creed or dogma, but interwoven through its entire development is the heart of Christianity and the lesson of the parable of the Good Samaritan.

Columbia University, the pioneer in training of civilian rehabilitators, offers a course that is

> . . . designed primarily to aid in the development of personnel equipped to perform tasks of an administrative nature which Americans are or in the future may be called upon to discharge in such countries as the United Nations may liberate or occupy. These tasks may be envisaged as ranging from those of the social worker who administers relief, to those of the administrator or economic expert assisting in the rehabilitation of local economic institutions and social agencies. While the immediate emphasis is upon the emergency tasks resulting from the war, the Program is also designed to afford training for those persons who are preparing for post-war careers abroad as representatives of American business firms, in government service, or on the staffs of international organizations.

Both these courses require approximately a year of study. They differ in that Columbia University is planning for the possibility of a longer term of service than the Pacific School of Religion, where the emphasis is placed entirely on the emergency period of service directly following the conclusion of hostilities. These two courses—one on the east and one on the west coast—are the only ones offered at the present time, but it is entirely possible that before the school term opens next fall there may be others.

Several other features of these programs might be mentioned. A student must master the language used in the territory for which he is training, and this must mean a thorough speaking as well as reading knowledge. While neither course guarantees employment upon its completion, private organizations, as well as the government, are expected to require workers in this field after the war. Just what the opportunities will be, however, it is not possible to say now. We do know that after the last war much work of this nature was required, and that plans are being made for more extensive programs this time.

To skeptics who wonder if we know what we are fighting for, and, knowing, if we will have the courage to see that we get it

when the battle has ceased, this preparing now for rehabilitation work is gratifying. In the first place, the fact that some sort of formal training is being offered so that workers will be adequately groomed for the difficulties ahead is reassuring. It means that such efforts will have a much greater chance for success. For though the heart be in the right place and the desire to serve strong, ignorance of the principles of good leadership or of the nature of the people to be served, might well neutralize the good intentions. With the will must go the understanding. Then, too, rehabilitation plans are inspiring because they are based upon the Christian precept of helping the neighbor. They should appeal particularly to New Churchmen, who profess that their religion is simple indeed, because it can be reduced to a way of life. Here, now, is an opportunity to show by example just what religion can mean. It is thrilling that such an opportunity can arise in the midst of a world of chaos and horror. Perhaps this may prove the justification for the war.

Some observers object that rehabilitation, though fine in principle, will not work. There will be too much hatred, they say. The spirits of the vanquished will be sorely scarred. They will want to clean their own houses, spiritually and physically. It is entirely possible that such may be the case. And yet for us to leave them alone in their agony, to bear their tremendous burdens unassisted, when we have the strength to lighten the load, seems to be entirely contrary to our ideals. Perhaps more good will come from the mere gesture of being willing to serve, than from any actual help. The spirit of good feeling, of affection, may do more than any other factor to help bridge the chasm of hatred and misunderstanding. Though rehabilitation be a difficult task, it seems to be based on a sound principle, worth working for, even if it means surmounting difficult obstacles. Such a program may not be entirely effective after this war. Even so, because of the work done this time, the job will have a better chance for success when it has to be done again. Though it takes hundreds of years to reach the ultimate goal, it will some day be reached, because it is the Christian way of life. As the Chinese say, a journey of a thousand *li* is taken but one step at a time.

As we said in the beginning, the spirit in which the work is done will largely determine its measure of success. Humility

should serve as the keynote—not the approach of the efficient victor, but that of a humble servant of the Lord. Undertaken in this spirit the rehabilitation program can go far towards determining the kind of world our children's children will know. We can only hope that those who choose to serve in this way will be given the wisdom and the understanding to be of great use. To quote Kipling:

The tumult and the shouting dies;
The captains and the kings depart.
Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice;
A humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of hosts,
Be with us yet
Lest we forget—lest we forget.

It has never been possible for religion and morality to maintain the existence and character of God apart from a cosmological framework in which His sovereign presence is exhibited. The God who is made known in space, the cosmic God, is self-sufficient. But the God who is made known in time, the God of the Messianic prophets, can only evoke respect and confidence to the extent to which He manifests Himself henceforth in physical space. The scientist and the philosopher may for their purposes ignore the theologian's God, but the theologian only at great peril can ignore the God of the scientists and the philosophers.

V. Monod, *Dieu dans l'Univers*, p. 26.

BOOK REVIEWS

ON BEGINNING FROM WITHIN. *By Douglas V. Steere. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1943. 149 pages. $1.50.*

To read this book thoughtfully is to have a real religious experience. The five chapters, which were originally given as lectures in Cambridge and Chicago offer fresh insight and suggestions for the development of inner spiritual resources. The author, Dr. Douglas V. Steere, is a Professor at Haverford College. He is a member of the Society of Friends, or the Quakers, and the influence of this fellowship, deeply felt throughout the book, serves only to enrich its material.

Dr. Steere's first chapter, "The Saint and Society," suggests that in liberal Protestant circles today much of the preoccupation with social problems is like the "busy work" a teacher makes up to keep idle hands out of mischief. We hear so much about the collective good, the expression of our religion in social service, that we sometimes forget where the roots of religion lie—and the roots of real service to others—in true *caring*. What Dr. Steere sees as the crying need of our day is more truly Christian individuals, "saints," or "apostles," for even the social order is influenced by what man most deeply wants. The Christian saint feels the joy and love that come from a sense of what the world is made for, of God and His will. The saint, or apostle, also sees the need for beginning in himself. He is not like the reformers who dedicate themselves to some great cause but do not see the need for putting away the sins (though they are often the same ones) in themselves. The saint begins with the relation of his own life to the end of all life, and he goes on to relate all he touches to that end. The characteristics of the saint or apostle are his singleness of purpose, permitting no turning back; his staying power, or inward firmness; his caring for men, not just humanity; his belief in the possibility of redeeming the group life; the quiet, yet militant, force of his personality.

In "The Authority of the Saint" (Chapter II) Professor Steere expresses the conviction that what the world needs most of all today is "not a new theology, not a new crop of brilliant students or candidates for the ministry, not a union of all sects into one religious body, not a renewed missionary movement, not a revised program of evangelism.

What it needs first and foremost is apostles or saints, men and women prepared to live in the full dispensation of Christian freedom." (p. 33) Such a saint or apostle is not necessarily a genius, although a genius with true humility may be one, but is *any* individual whose capacities are wholly open to use for the purposes of God. "The only difference between an apostle and ourselves is that he has faced and accepted without condition the quiet demand, 'Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath,' and we have not. A wag has suggested that a moderately good Christian is about as good as a moderately good egg." (p. 36) The apostle's authority springs from the way he lives, from what he *is,* as much as from what he says and does. We cannot excuse ourselves from beginning where we are with what we have. If we look at the saints of former times—Peter, Thomas, John, Paul, Augustine, Brother Lawrence, to name only a few at random—the amazing fact is what God has done with this material, with all its weaknesses and peculiarities. Nor is this apostleship a sad or heavy matter; it is the relating of an individual life to the end and meaning of *all* life, and while it often takes quite an unexpected direction, the development is fully and joyfully human.

In the third chapter Dr. Steere discusses the need for "A New Set of Devotional Exercises." These should be as carefully worked out as the famous manual of Ignatius Loyola, but aimed at a different sort of obedience to God—not a military or feudalistic submission of the will, but "creative obedience" to a wise and mature Father who is a great Friend and the loving ruler of the world. Such exercises would serve to arouse men from their inertia, to break their natural "vegetative rhythm." The practices of the past should be adapted to today's needs: self-denial, "islands" of silence, meditation, prayer in all its degrees from the "simple loving response" in gratitude for God's love, to that of the completely integrated personality working with God in the thick of life.

"Devotion and Theology," the fourth chapter of the book, develops forcefully the thesis that the roots of real faith are in devotion, that all the great new ideas in theology have sprung out of great and moving devotional experiences. Too often our generation's idea of God, Dr. Steere feels, has been jelly-like, and formless—like the roadside sign that Charles Bennett misread "Gorton's God, no bones." (Of course it really said "Cod.") We need the form that theology gives to our thoughts about God and the purpose of life but we need even

more the true devotion out of which theology grows. Dr. Steere drives home his argument with references to various great thinkers, Bernard of Clairvaux, Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventura—and not least Augustine, whose overwhelming sense of God's grace to him, led to the development of his great theological ideas.

The closing chapter of the book is called "Death's Illumination of Life." Deprecating modern society's silly attempt to conceal death, and its false emphasis on youth, the author movingly describes how the contemplation of death strips the "me" and individuates it. Alone, it must face the eternal. What eternal qualities does it possess? Only by losing one's self in true love and service can we overcome our inadequacies. Such service is "not reminiscent of the Swedenborgian vision of Hell as that state where all were compelled to rush frantically from place to place lovelessly doing things for others." (p. 148) True service is rather to do as Unamuno advised: "Sow yourselves, sow the living part of yourselves, in the furrows of life."

M. E. C.

THE PROBLEM OF PAIN. *By C. S. Lewis. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1944. 148 pages. $1.50.*

Reading this book has been one of the treats of many years. It is a book to which the reader will go back again and again; not only is it compact and thorough, and not to be absorbed at one reading; unnoted suggestions spring up in it, and its fresh outlooks on the whole problem of pain evoke more and more penetrating thought. The subject is involved, the discussion clear and readable; the subject is sobering enough, surely, and the discussion nothing short of exhilarating. There is masterful combination of realism and tenderness, of sensitiveness to human suffering and a searching and curative wit. You will mark sentence after sentence for its pith and very pat wording. The small book is a witness that truth is not dull, but brilliant.

The very last thing that Mr. Lewis does is to minimize the problem of pain. Indeed the first thing he does is to see to it that the problem comes before us in the proportions it has. Of course religion must be on the scene to give the problem its full acuteness—and not only religion which has a feeling for Something awesome in world and life, or religion which sees a moral government over world and man, or religion which identifies the awesome and the moral; when Chris-

tianity is part of the setting, with its historical disclosure of an all-good Father in heaven and an all-powerful God, then the problem of pain has risen to its full stature.

So runs Mr. Lewis's first chapter, whereupon he gives his second to a discussion of "Divine Omnipotence" and his third to one of "Divine Goodness." To lift out only a main thought from these chapters, teeming with penetrating analysis: all-power is not the power to do all things. If it were should not omnipotence alleviate if not banish pain? Especially such pain as comes from the moral neutrality or the indifference of the framework of things to good and evil? But to the ongoing of human life and the exercise of free choice a fixed external order of nature is indispensable. The supreme good of moral and spiritual growth, which will be unforced, is possible only with such an impersonal order, but with such an impersonal order pain becomes certain. As for the Divine Goodness, can that be what we are prone to think it is, kindliness chiefly? Little reduction of the dimensions of the problem of pain would come of that! For where is the kindness in allowing as much suffering as befalls man? But goodness is love of what man can be at his best. To bear him toward that best is even greater kindness than to spare him the pain that will attend on the process.

Why, however, is so much to be corrected, and painfully corrected, in man to bring him to his intended growth? Mr. Lewis is convinced that Christianity has to preach all over again its diagnosis of human wickedness. He peels off the concealments which will not let us see our guilt and corruptness. He is not reinstating, he says, the doctrine of Total Depravity. "I disbelieve that doctrine, partly on the logical ground that if our depravity is total we should not know ourselves to be depraved, and partly because experience shows us much goodness in human nature." "I have been trying to make the reader believe that we actually are, at present, creatures whose characters must be in some respects a horror to God, as it is when we really see it a horror to ourselves. This I believe to be a fact; and I notice that the holier a man is, the more fully he is aware of that fact. . . . Depend upon it, when the saints say that they—even they—are vile, they are recording truth with scientific accuracy." And there follows a chapter on the question how this perversity and corruption came about. Without involving himself in the profundities of the Genesis story, Mr. Lewis ventures an explanation of the Fall of Man—an explanation which will more than interest a

New Churchman. "This sin," he says, "has been described by Saint Augustine as the result of Pride, of the movement whereby a creature (that is, an essentially dependent being whose principle of existence lies not in itself but in another) tries to set up on its own, to exist for itself." "This act of self-will on the part of the creature, which constitutes an utter falseness to its true creaturely position, is the only sin that can be conceived as the Fall."

With this setting from overhead and from below, as it were, Mr. Lewis begins his attack on the problem of pain. A first answer is that the good we are open to is corrective or remedial, and "that to render back the will which we have so long claimed for our own, is in itself, wherever and however it is done, a grievous pain." Nor will the human spirit "even begin to try to surrender self-will as long as all seems to be well with it." "No doubt Pain as God's megaphone is a terrible instrument; it may lead to final and unrepented rebellion. But it gives the only opportunity the bad man can have for amendment. It removes the veil; it plants the flag of truth within the fortress of a rebel soul." "If the first and lowest operation of pain shatters the illusion that all is well, the second shatters the illusion that what we have, whether good or bad in itself, is our own and enough for us." "The third operation of suffering is a little harder to grasp. . . . If pain sometimes shatters the creature's false self-sufficiency, yet . . . it teaches him the self-sufficiency which really ought to be his—the 'strength, which, if Heaven gave it, may be called his own.' "

Even with quotation of Mr. Lewis's words, this is a very feeble rendition of his chapter on "Human Pain," on which another follows, giving six more or less unrelated propositions "necessary to complete our account of human suffering." This seventh chapter is one of the most rewarding in the book; there is a fine paragraph, for instance, on the proposition, "Of all evils, pain only is sterilized or disinfected evil." Of the remaining three chapters of the book, one is on "Hell" answering five common objections to the doctrine of Hell and the suffering subsumed there; the next a chapter of imaginative discernment on "Animal Pain," with a startlingly different and appealing view of "animal immortality"; and the last on "Heaven"—"we need not suppose that the necessity for something analogous to self-conquest will ever be ended, or that eternal life will not also be eternal dying. It is in this sense that, as there may be pleasures in hell (God shield us from them), there may be something not all unlike pains in heaven (God grant us soon to taste them)."

Mr. Lewis goes deep and far for his answers to the problem of pain. I hope the résumés attempted indicate both facts. How deep he goes, let one more quotation tell. "When Christianity says that God loves man, it means that God *loves* man: not that He has some 'disinterested,' because really indifferent, concern for our welfare, but that, in awful and surprising truth we are the objects of His love. You asked for a loving God: you have one. The great spirit you so lightly invoked, the 'lord of terrible aspect,' is present: not a senile benevolence that drowsily wishes you to be happy in your own way, not the cold philanthropy of a conscientious magistrate, nor the care of a host who feels responsible for the comfort of his guests, but the consuming fire Himself, the Love that made the worlds, persistent as the artist's love for his work and despotic as a man's love for a dog, provident and venerable as a father's love for a child, jealous, inexorable, exacting as love between the sexes. How this should be, I do not know: it passes reason to explain why any creatures, not to say creatures such as we, should have a value so prodigious in their Creator's eyes. It is certainly a burden of glory not only beyond our deserts but also, except in rare moments of grace, beyond our desiring." "That is, whether we like it or not, God intends to give us what we need, not what we now think we want. Once more, we are embarrassed by the intolerable compliment, by too much love, not too little."

"The only purpose of the book is to solve the intellectual problem raised by suffering; for the far higher task of teaching fortitude and patience I was never fool enough to suppose myself qualified, nor have I anything to offer my readers except my conviction that when pain is to be borne, a little courage helps more than much knowledge, a little human sympathy more than much courage, and the least tincture of the love of God more than all."

W. F. W.

From Victory to Peace. *By Paul Hutchinson. Chicago and New York: Willett, Clark & Company, 1943. viii, 226 pages. $1.50.*

A "bad peace," following the present war, is a depressing likelihood if traditional procedures of official peace-making are followed. But a "good peace" may well be the outcome if the Christian Church uncompromisingly applies the dynamic of its awakening insights. Such is the sum and substance of this stirring volume by Paul Hutchinson,

the veteran journalist and managing editor of the *Christian Century*.

The author entertains no "perfectionist conceptions of what the peace should be." p. 6) He concedes that in the existing context the formulated peace will inevitably reflect adjustments, compromises, conflicting interests. Yet, in the "rough-and-ready terms which are instantly understood by the man in the street," an adequate differentiation can be made between good and bad. According to this pattern, "a 'good' peace may be defined as one which secures at least a semi-permanent stability in the world's practical order and does not obviously sow the seeds of future wars. And a 'bad' peace may be defined as one which establishes no such stability, but creates conditions out of which future wars are likely to arise." (p. 7)

Will the church rally its energies in a way to count for a constructive peace? Mr. Hutchinson finds definite hope of this in a series of occasions since the outbreak of the war. To him these occasions, composed of church pronouncements and gatherings, indicate a notable revival of the church's "prophetic insight" as applied to world reordering. Five of these are dealt with specifically as typical of a considerable number. The findings of these five, together with those of a sixth—a *Declaration on World Peace* by American Protestant, Catholic and Jewish Leaders on August 26, 1943—are grouped in a 25-page appendix in Mr. Hutchinson's book.

The five church occasions discussed in the main body of the text are the publication of the *Joint Proposals of Protestant and Catholic Leaders of Great Britain* on December 21, 1940; The Malvern Conference in England, January 7-10, 1941; the Delaware, Ohio, Conference of March 3-5 1942; the publication of the *Six Pillars of Peace* by the Federal Council of Churches on March 18, 1943; and the Princeton Conference of International Christian Leaders at Princeton, New Jersey, from July 8 to 12, 1943. It is the author's opinion that among these five, the Delaware Conference gave best all-around expression to the church's prophetic insight.

Taking these church expressions as normative of a "good peace," the following broad pattern of existing outlook emerges in the author's analysis:

1) a church calling for a genuine world community; for the doing away with imperialism; for all-around equal treatment of races; for total disarmament save for a world police force jointly controlled; for postwar treatment of defeated peoples primarily on a basis of recon-

ciliation, under whatever necessity of establishing adequate safeguards immediately following the war; for world economic reorganization based on the recognition, as the author interprets the church attitudes, that the present disorders mark "the passing of *laissez-faire* capitalism as the governing social and economic faith in the dominant West" (p. 166);

2) the general ambiguity or reticence of the political heads of the United Nations in the statement of peace aims, together with positive trends in these nations out of harmony with what the churches call for;

3) positive agreement in some influential secular quarters with all the peace objectives as outlined by the churches.

As a matter of official commitment, the full scope of the Atlantic Charter's provisions seem not yet to be determined—statements by Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Stalin appearing to call for a broader application than Mr. Churchill is willing to allow. (See pp. 84-87) On still other vital concerns of postwar settlement, the author, analyzing a radio speech by Mr. Churchill on March 21, 1943, and a magazine article in *Saturday Evening Post* of April 10, 1943, which claimed to represent Mr. Roosevelt's official views, concludes that neither of these leaders "gives more than lip service to the idea of a living world federation, neither is ready to contemplate any diminution of national sovereignty, and both are really thinking in terms of new power politics." (p. 65)

Among unofficial postwar programs, Walter Lippmann's book, *United States Foreign Policy,* calling for "a permanent, formal, military alliance with Great Britain and Russia," is characterized as an expression of "naked power politics." (pp. 67-68) To the author, an ominous indication of growing imperialistic tendencies in the United States is the degree of public support of Secretary Knox's declaration "in favor of obtaining naval bases in all parts of the Pacific as part of the spoils of war." (p. 194)

An impressive array of secular agreement with the very settlements called for by the churches is cited in the author's pages. Space permits little more than a bare listing of some outstanding instances. Wendell Willkie, in his famous interview at Chungking, China, in October, 1942, declared that empires of nation over nation must go. (pp. 79-80) Dr. Lewis L. Lorwin of the Brookings Institution posits a genuine world community as the goal of certain interim arrangements he would favor at the close of the war. (p. 48) Dr. Edward Hallett Carr,

distinguished as diplomat and journalist, and now Woodrow Wilson Professor of International Politics at the University College of Wales, favors a policy of reconcilation with the Axis peoples and, as a social scientist, believes the postwar period should herald a revolutionary re-motivation of the world social and economic order. (pp. 150-154, 168-170) Pearl S. Buck, Wendell Willkie and *Fortune* Magazine see no future peace without a revised concept of race relationships. (pp. 110-111, 112-113)

Obviously, there is some danger that the rank and file church mind may not rally itself in time to convince political leaders that the voice of the five church occasions of recent years, insisting upon the moral order as binding upon nations is indeed the voice of Christendom. Yet hope is afforded in the growing concern of American Christians over the kind of peace in the making.

The enthusiastic acclaim which has greeted Mr. Hutchinson's book seems to me abundantly deserved. Some such volume of relatively brief compass was urgently needed to focus our awareness of impending good or evil in postwar settlements, to quicken our response to the possibility of a "people's peace" more enduringly based than any yet devised at the close of a war.

One comment may perhaps be made without invidious reflection on Mr. Hutchinson's outlook or on the church pronouncements which give such driving power to his argument. The "thunder of Sinai" may be needed to secure some decent initial settlement at the close of the war. But if this initial arrangement is to expand into fruitful, abiding peace, rank and file Christians must acquire a new sense of Gospel as fulfilling the Law. There is a Promised Land into which even Moses does not enter. The world will truly live again only in a practical resurrection of the triumphant insight: "The Law was given by Moses, grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

E. C. H.

EVERY DAY A PRAYER. *By Marguerite Harmon Bro. Chicago: Willett, Clark and Company, 1943. 396 pages. $1.50.*

This little book not only brings us a prayer for each day, but what is of infinitely greater value, it suggests a *thought* for each day of the year. Too many of us are inclined to go through life without taking the time to think deeply, purposively. Mrs. Bro gives us in these

pages a choice selection of nuggets upon which to meditate during—and after—our daily devotions.

Making every day a prayer, the author says, is living it so that the source of energy is freely tapped, so that there is a flow of spirit through spirit. To achieve this state in which we are receptive to Divine influx, we must have an understanding of God. We must know where and when to look for our Lord. "Seek and ye shall find." Mrs. Bro suggests 365 roads to understanding—from the prison of Socrates to the pulpit of Allen Knight Chalmers; from the fables of Aesop to the psychology of William James; from the whispering voice of nature to the strident shouts of the city. All of these "roads" are gathered together under five general classifications. There is, for example, some excellent material culled from the great religions of mankind, indicative of the quest for God according to the precepts of Zoroaster, Krishna, Mencius and Baltasar Gracian. Then there is a splendid section designed to help us find God through Nature: in the beauty of the flowers, in the wonderful system of life, in the wisdom of the "laws of nature." Still another section is devoted to excerpts from the greatest among Christian thinkers: Paul, St. Francis d'Assisi, John Wesley, to mention but a few. A fourth group of readings helps us to appreciate the presence of the Lord in our personal experiences. And finally, there are selections which point up the qualities which Paul calls the "fruits of the Spirit"—love, joy, gratitude, peace, patience, courage.

The reader will be amazed at the scope of the material found in Mrs. Bro's manual. Not only does it offer helps to personal devotion for laymen—the minister will find it a welcome source of colorful illustrative material, suitable for sermon or lecture work: anecdotes, quotations from universal religious literature, excerpts from great poetry, and beautiful prayers, including two from the New-Church Book of Worship.

Any one of the 365 topics suggested by Mrs. Bro could be expanded into a worthwhile sermon or into an informal devotional service for family or group use, but the best use of all, as Mrs. Bro suggests, is to stimulate the habit of personal devotions among Christian men and women. If you are accustomed to spend a part of each day in private communion with the Lord, or if family prayers are a vital part of your religious life, you ought to own this book.

Robert L. Young.

THE EARLIEST GOSPEL. *By Frederick C. Grant. Nashville, Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1943. 270 pp. $2.50.*

VARIETIES OF NEW TESTAMENT RELIGION. *By Ernest F. Scott. New York, Scribners, 1943. viii, 310 pp. $2.75.*

These two books offer an interesting contrast. Scott has been one of the important figures of the passing generation. Grant represents the present day, being in fact Scott's successor at Union. Scott's is the better written and treats a wider field, though it is also the one I think is more often wrong. Together they present an interesting cross-section of current New Testament study.

Grant's fine study throws light on the nature, the history and the implications of the Gospel of Mark. The Gospel of Mark is no simple biography. As a matter of fact the biographical interest is decidedly secondary. Mark is really a theological tract. It makes the identification (which Grant together with many scholars thinks was not made by Jesus Himself) between Jesus and the apocalyptic "Son of Man," now also identified with the Messiah, and further, it attempts to show that Jesus was not simply one who was to return as Messiah, but that He had already been the Messiah during His life on earth. This raised the problem of how the Messiah could have remained unknown and how He could have been put to death. Mark dealt with the first by the theory of the Messianic secret; the second is answered by the Passion narrative. The Markan theology has sometimes been traced to Paul but Grant shows that the truth is that both the Markan and Pauline theologies have their roots in the primitive theology of the church. The Gospel about Jesus as contrasted with the Gospel of Jesus goes back to the earliest tradition, though it is highly doubtful that it goes back to Jesus Himself.

The material which Mark uses in this fashion had a prior history. It had its origin in the sayings and doings of Jesus and in the varying response that He met. The Gospel was the proclamation of the message of salvation through Him. This proclamation was oral at first, and in the Aramaic language. Who first wrote it—or parts of it—down is not known. In a singularly well-balanced discussion of the Aramaic roots of Mark, Grant shows that while the influence of this origin is clearly reflected in Mark there is no ground for Torrey's assertion that Mark itself was originally written in Aramaic.

To meet the needs which arose in preaching the Gospel, various stories took form. The longest as well as the oldest is the "Passion

Narrative," whose climax is really the Resurrection. This formed the starting point for Mark's Gospel. It was prefaced by accounts of controversies with the authorities that explained His rejection. These materials were supplemented by other teaching and narrative, part perhaps written, part oral, as it circulated in Palestine and Rome, where Mark worked. If at first glance this account seems inferior to the old opinion that Mark wrote down directly the preaching of Peter, Grant points out that ". . . In place of one individual's interpretation of Christ we have a tradition which shines like a shaft of light through the refracting, expanding prism of a rich and varied religious experience, and by its many-splendored radiance begins to prove how much was contained in the apparently simple and single, but really complex and manifold, manifestation of the divine mystery—the revelation of the mystery hid from past ages, the message of God through Jesus Christ, his Son, our Lord." (p. 73f.)

Grant is not, however, interested in Mark's Gospel simply as a specimen of early Christian literature to be dissected by approved critical methods. His concern is to understand its history as a means by which the relevance of its message for today may be appreciated. The question of its relevance is discussed explicitly in two chapters and the Epilogue, though in these Grant really steps outside the bounds of Mark. One chapter deals with the problem of anti-Semitism. While Mark's account of the events leading to the crucifixion has contributed to Christian hatred of the Jews, the truth is that the earliest tradition blames the authorities, Jewish and Roman, and is not motivated by anti-Jewish feeling.

With regard to the social Gospel Grant thinks that Mark's picture of the teaching of Jesus is one-sided from over-emphasis on the apocalyptic expectations. Nevertheless, Jesus taught no social Gospel in the sense that He was interested in humanitarianism or sociological utopianism. "It was something vastly profounder, a religious ethic which involved a social as well as a personal application, but within the framework of the beloved society of the Kingdom of God." (p. 251.)

Coming to most direct expression in the Epilogue is the *motif* which is heard from time to time throughout. It is the conviction that "only religion, actual faith and practice, genuine obedience to the gospel of God's Reign over the world will ever save us or the society we are in." (p. 267.) For Christians this religion and this Gospel stem from Jesus. For a knowledge of that Gospel Mark is one of our primary

documents, and any light which can be shed on it is a real contribution to our deepest need.

Scott's book also makes use of historical scholarship to recover from the New Testament a message for the present day, but he approaches his task in quite a different fashion. Grant confines himself to a single book, while Scott ranges over the whole New Testament. In it he finds eight main types or varieties of Christianity. His thesis is that despite the wide variety Christianity was and is *one*.

"In its deeper interests the church had always been one, and now it was made to realise that these interests were more important than any others. It learned to concentrate on what was vitally Christian, leaving the debatable matters to settle themselves. In the religious history of our own time we have a clear illustration of what happened in the early period. On all sides the sectarian barriers have been steadily breaking down. Churches that were separated last century by differences which appeared unsurmountable are coming to draw together, or have been already united. It is not that the controversial questions have now been answered, or that they have been slurred over by some doubtful compromise. The questions are still there, for any one who cares to trouble about them, but of their own accord they have fallen into the background. Everywhere the church is confronted with purely Pagan conceptions of life; it has grown conscious, as never before, of the nature and the incomparable value of the Christian demands. The battle is now for Christianity, not for some one variety of it as against another." (p. 289f.)

With reference to the New Testament at least it is much easier to demonstrate the variety than to maintain the unity. It does not suffice to say as Scott does that the message and personality of Jesus were so complex and many-sided that no one way of grasping it could be adequate. Even though this be so it is still true that the variety has many other roots. Moreover, the assertion that the early leaders were aware of the demands of this original complexity and recognized all varieties as being equally valid with their own is, to put it mildly, very dubious. This constant tendency to minimize real differences is one of the annoying things about the book.

There are others, not unconnected with this one. Words are used vaguely and in equivocal senses. Motives are freely attributed on purely speculative grounds. Scott is well aware of *Formgeschichte* and recent studies of the relation of Hellenistic religion to Christianity

but he scarcely gives them sufficient weight. That any responsible scholar had said "In the first century the boundaries between Judaism and Hellenism had been largely obliterated" would be incredible if the words were not found in cold type on page sixty-six.

Nevertheless, when all these criticisms are made, it is still a book well worth reading. Though it is a serious book it is well and clearly written, avoiding technicalities and professional jargon without being superficial. Many of its descriptions and interpretations grow out of an unusual combination of wide learning and penetrating insight. Such are for example the description of Jewish Christianity (p. 38ff), the characterization of Hellenistic Christianity (pp. 69-73), the discussion of the "Moralists" and of the relation between morals and religion (Chap. VII). The chapter on the Johannine teaching is very uneven. To say "Scholars would now admit that in some particulars this (Fourth) Gospel is nearer to the facts than any of the others" (p. 253) is utterly misleading. The particulars are minor ones at best and on the main questions, the Johannine outline of the ministry, and the completely unhistorical character of the discourses, there has been no significant shift in critical opinion. On the other hand he has many illuminating things to say: ". . . The Evangelist is concerned, no less than the Docetists, with the validity of faith. He realises, like them, that we can believe in Christ only when we know him as not merely an historical memory but as a fact in inward experience. How can we tell, however, that the presence revealed to us in the life of faith is no other than that of Christ? We can only do so through our knowledge of what he was when he lived on earth." (p. 264.)

". . . Here is a man who believes with his whole heart in the Christian message. He cannot but try to understand it in the manner that is most real to him and to harmonise it with his view of the world. This has been the instinct of the sincerest Christians in all ages. They cannot merely repeat ancient phrases and subscribe to creeds which have obviously become outworn. They try to apprehend each belief in its essential meaning, and put it into their own language, and integrate it with the life and thought of their time. The truth does not rightly come home to them, they cannot honestly live by it, until they have thus expressed it in the forms most real to themselves." (p. 276.)

One of the strong points about all Scott's writing about the New Testament is that he never forgets that it is primarily a religious book. He may be mistaken as to just what the religion is, but he is surely

right in looking for it. Religion is neither literature, nor history, not even theology or piety, and Scott neither forgets this nor allows the reader to forget it.

Fundamentally, however, Scott is always worth reading because he has in the background a definite philosophy. It is a sort of blend of Platonism and Hegelianism. He believes in an essence which exists apart from its various embodiments, a form separable from its content. This essence is so complex that no embodiment is adequate, so that its striving for expression proceeds through a Hegelian triad of thesis, antithesis and synthesis. If the strength of his writing is in the fact that he has a philosophy, its weakness springs from the weakness of the particular philosophy. But the remedy for bad philosophy is not less philosophy but more. The philosophy need not be the philosophy of the schools, but without some there is lacking that broad world-view capable of embracing the varied details in a comprehensive whole which will give them significance. Any book that has such a basis, as Scott's has, is bound to be illuminating.

F. R. C.

THE FALL OF CHRISTIANITY: A STUDY OF CHRISTIANITY, THE STATE AND WAR. *By G. J. Heering. Translated from the Dutch by J. W. Thompson, with a foreword by E. Stanley Jones. New York: Fellowship Publications, 1943. 243 pages. $1.50.*

The relation of Christianity to the war—and of historic and modern Christianity to all war and militarism—is a subject of deep concern to many earnest Christians today. This book will be of help to such people in their effort towards increased understanding of this complex problem. The original Dutch edition was published in 1928; in 1930 it was published in Great Britain, and in 1943 in this country. Being written between the two great wars, it has clearer vision and insight, according to E. Stanley Jones, in the foreword, than would have been possible today "amid the rain of falling bombs . . . and the more subtle bombardment of scientifically administered propaganda" (p. v). "The time has come," says Dr. Jones, "for Christianity to disentangle itself from imperialism and war . . . This book will help to disentangle Christianity" (p. vii).

Professor Heering makes a study of the early Christians and their understanding of the Gospel, their detachment from worldly affairs,

their lack of national consciousness. The main reason for opposing war came "directly from the spirit of the Gospel, which held violence to be sin, and enjoined love of one's neighbor and respect for the human personality as the image of God, as the object of his love" (p. 32). There was no "military problem" in those first centuries—a Christian could not be a soldier. Not till sometime during the third century did Christians begin to be concerned for the fate of this world, to feel any consciousness of responsibility in this direction. At that time, also, a war-like note appeared. It was a part of the development of the Church to come to grips with problems of the world. But when the Emperor Constantine became converted in 312 and made Christianity the State religion in 324, that was the turning-point. The Church received support and earthly protection from the State; but when it became subservient to the State, and was increasingly dominated by the State, that was retrogression rather than progress. Professor Heering dates "the fall of Christianity" from that period.

He then considers the relation of Christianity to the State as interpreted and synthesized by the leading religious movements: Catholic, Lutheran, Calvinist, humanist, and so on. He emphasizes the need for a true Christian sociology, and shows how "the alliance between Christianity and the State did much injury and violence to Christian principle, how every Christian theory of the State down to the present time has failed to protect Christian truth, and how this failure, plainer today than ever, has left imperialism and militarism a perfectly free hand" (p. 86).

In the chapter "The State and War," the development and rise of modern State absolutism is traced, with surveys of the trends of dominant philosophies of the period, the contributions and influence of Machiavelli, Hegel, Fichte, Kant. It is Professor Heering's conviction that "the State only has a future in so far as it develops more and more as an expression of justice" (p. 92). His study leads to the conclusion that the alliance of State and Christianity should not be annulled, but he is insistent that "the State shall so recognize its alliance with Christianity as to honor it and to take heed lest it encroach on or undermine Christian principle" (p. 134). Elsewhere he speaks of this alliance as "necessary but too close" (p. 178).

These first three chapters seem of especial value, with their compact historical résumés. In chapter four, the moral judgment of war comes as the logical result of the previous study from the Christian stand-

point. In the closing chapter Professor Heering presents his conception of the task of Christianity today, of the individual Christian as well as of the organization. "Where the Church as a whole remains silent . . . those members of the Church whose eyes are open to the moral intolerability and sinfulness of war must speak" (p. 184).

E. R.

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